



NORTH CAROLINA
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
of the COURTS

Report on Online Collections and Payments

Section 18A.21.(e) of Session Law 2015-241

Technology Services Division

March 1, 2016



Introduction

Section 18A.21.(e) of S. L. 2015-241, provides as follows:

"SECTION 18A.21.(e) As a precursor to the implementation of its e-Courts initiative, the Administrative Office of the Courts shall establish a pilot program in New Hanover County for the online collection and payment of court costs, fines, and related fees, with the potential of expanding the program statewide at the conclusion of a successful pilot. The costs incurred by the programs established pursuant to this section shall be borne by vendors selected by the Administrative Office of the Courts. The Administrative Office of the Courts shall report by March 1, 2016, to the chairs of the Joint Legislative Committee on Justice and Public Safety and the chairs of the House of Representatives and Senate Appropriations Committees on Justice and Public Safety on the pilot program established pursuant to this section and its plans to expand the program statewide."

The North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts (NCAOC) respectfully submits this project status report pursuant to that legislative mandate.

Project Development

NCAOC's Technology Services Division ("TSD") began working on project development of the Online Collection and Payment ("OCAP") project immediately after passage of the special provision. To ensure that the project design would meet the business needs of judicial stakeholders, TSD convened an advisory committee that included clerks of superior court, and representatives from NCAOC's legal, financial, training and technology sections. The advisory group developed a plan to allow online payments for supervised or unsupervised probation cases in New Hanover, Wake and Chatham counties by March 1, 2016. NCAOC elected to use NIC, the same vendor that NCAOC uses for payNCticket, to process the payment transactions.

TSD implemented the first phase of the OCAP project in New Hanover County on February 1, 2016, and successfully began accepting online payments of supervised and unsupervised probation costs, fines and fees. As of February 24, 2016, approximately 43 offenders had made online payments. NCAOC will complete implementation in Wake and Chatham counties on March 1, 2016, with anticipated rollout to the remaining 97 counties by May 31, 2016. Throughout this process, NCAOC will continue to work in partnership with the advisory committee to identify any issues with the project and to develop necessary enhancements.



Operational Overview

To make an online payment, the defendant must provide the county and case number in order for the system to generate a real-time lookup of all costs, fines, and fees associated with the case. The system then assesses the status of the case to determine eligibility for online payment. Once eligibility is determined, the defendant will confirm payment details, and the system will utilize existing functionality to process the payment transaction. After successful payment, the online payment system will interface with NCAOC's financial management system to record the payment.

Project Cost

The projected cost for development and pilot of the initial phase of the OCAP project in New Hanover County was \$161,881, and NCAOC came in under budget and 30 days ahead of the original March 1, 2016 timeline. As indicated in Table 1 below, NCAOC remains on schedule to extend the project statewide by May 31, 2016. Total costs expended as of February 24, 2016 are approximately nine percent below the projected budget.

Table 1. OCAP Project Costs

OCAP Pilot	Status	Projected Cost	Actual Cost
Develop OCAP Probation Payments and implement in New Hanover, Wake and Chatham Counties by 03/01/2016	New Hanover completed 02/01/2016 Wake and Chatham to be completed 03/1/2016	\$161,881	\$131,274
Statewide Rollout	Status	Projected Cost through 05/31/2016	Actual Cost
Deliver key enhancements and implement OCAP system in 97 counties by 05/31/2016	On Schedule	\$128,865	TBD
		\$290,746	TBD

Summary

Providing a means for the online payment of court costs, fines, and fees is a significant step toward realizing the eCourts vision of Chief Justice Mark Martin. When fully implemented, the OCAP system will accept all court costs, fines, and fees, with some limited exceptions. NCAOC successfully completed pilot implementation of the project in Wake, Chatham and New Hanover Counties, and anticipates statewide rollout by May 31, 2016. Feedback on the project from New Hanover County has been very positive, and NCAOC continues to work with the advisory group to ensure the success of the project and to enhance functionality of the OCAP system.



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